

THE PIANO-PLAYER REVIEW.

A MONTHLY
MUSICAL JOURNAL FOR
OWNERS OF PIANO-PLAYERS AND
ALL MUSIC LOVERS.

EDITED BY
ERNEST NEWMAN.

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The Piano-Player Review

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Surely no growing industry, no movement connected with an art, and so subtle an art as music, ever put forth an effort for recognition less calculated to do real good to itself than this manifestation of the British piano-player.

Granted that the chief idea was to interest the trade, granted that the chief object was wholesale orders, even then it seemed to me that many of the exhibitors' representatives assumed that the average dealer was devoid of common-sense, had no knowledge of the thing he had come to see, and most certainly was expected to be as devoid of musical knowledge or culture as a wheelbarrow ; and there must be scores of people ready to endorse this.

At the stands of most of the already well-known player firms one could hear a player at its best (subject to the usual exhibition disadvantages), and I heard Chopin's G minor Ballade at one of the very newest firms' stand under the hands of someone who evidently expected occasionally to play to a visitor who knew one tune other than the National Anthem ; but these were the exceptions.

Can I be expected to commend to our readers players which in the hands of the actual exhibitor would have driven a Salvation Army drummer to exasperation ?

Merely clever mechanism, a new motor, a wonderful pneumatic, a direct action, a simplified this or that, a metal crank for a wood one, a composite flange for a brass one, one screw to move instead of three—what are all these things but mere selling points unless the result produced is a distinct playing advantage ?

Years ago I remember one of the best known men in the piano trade, who would examine the mechanism of a new piano most carefully ; he would then sit down to it and play it. "Ah ! I thought so. Alterations, alterations, but no improvement," was most often his only remark.

That is just what I felt about this exhibition. Heaps of alterations, a number of new patents (this without any search among the old patent records), and only one real improvement from the musician's point of view.

What is the matter with the British manufacturer, that at this exhibition he failed even to give his player a chance?

Why is it not possible to put up demonstrators who can get that result in playing of which the instrument is capable?

Except that I played a number of them myself and brought my own knowledge of player construction to extract, where possible, the points of merit, I should have come away feeling that my simple duty to readers of the *P.P.R.* was to say that with the exception of just those already well-known players most of the others were monstrosities. It would therefore seem that the British manufacturer feels that the effort of having to provide for or make player actions is a nuisance to him, and that if people will buy these new-fangled *toys*—well, they will!—but it's a nuisance, and any old tune accompanied with a string of claims is good enough for exhibition purposes.

One demonstrator played to me a popular prelude at nearly presto all through, and beautifully *regular* time, too.

He then said, "Sir, it's the most perfect blowing in the whole exhibition. Try it." I did!

I suppose if one calls a sparrow a canary often enough one really believes the bird a canary, or where was the object of asking one to try a player so obviously bad?

Of the metal actions and part-metal actions, which were the most noticeable departure from ordinary construction, I have little to say except that they were beautifully made, and as a matter of mere durability may last a dreadfully long time; but I found no better touch anywhere than can be found in the best of ordinary pneumatic actions; but one scarcely expects any idea to be perfected at first production.

Only two or three years' hard wear can prove the desirability or otherwise of the use of metal for working parts. The saving of space in construction is an advantage where space for a piano is very limited.

The new action of Messrs. Brinsmead has metal casings of the pneumatic valves, which valves are, however, of the usual high-pressure kind, and they are so made that the tuner can take them out and replace them easily. This is an advantage to the tuner and perhaps the dealer, but the purchaser will need a reduced quotation for annual tuning contract if he is to benefit thereby. The action is beautifully made and is quite sensitive in playing.

For the past three or four months two or three very sincere people have been writing nasty things in a nice way one to the other, in our correspondence pages.

The controversy raged round touch, mechanism, and the merits of the two best-known accenting devices. The two last contributors both admit weaknesses, both claim superiority, one from a general point of view, the other, perhaps, from a particular point.

However that may be, I was much concerned with the two views as coming from men who have taken great pains to find out the exact value of their respective players, and looking back over the correspondence it would seem that both enthusiasts have to be content with and proud of accenting devices which are imperfect—"both fakes."

May I ask these two worthies to shake hands and rejoice that the great accenting desideratum is accomplished? Perhaps it is time for a further paper on the "Evolution of the Piano - Player," for the new accenting device may stand as the finest thing since accenting was attempted.

Here are the claims made, taken from the brochure. "Any note, melody, or phrase in any part of the keyboard, and to

any extent or degree *over* any accompaniment at any moment (the italics are my own) without any effort or dexterity."

The whole point of this claim lies in accenting a note at any moment, *i.e.*, when the accented note is struck at the same instant as others.

A ten-minutes' careful examination of these claims made at the exhibition instrument led me to think that the claim is justly made and well fulfilled, but I should like to have tried several very severe tests before pronouncing it absolutely perfect.

Perfect or not, it really did play three notes close together at the same moment, one accented, two not.

As an accenting device pure and simple it merits the attention of the piano-playing industry at large, and one can only hope, if the device has no serious defects, that every good player manufacturer will be able to acquire a use of the patents.

To many users of the piano-player these points of musical perfection do not matter, but there must be a great number of enthusiasts to whom they do.

The patents do not appear to belong to any particular piano-player maker.

At the next British Music Exhibition, if there should be one, it is to be hoped that the makers themselves will by then have realized that the only devices which live in competition are those which materially add to the musical possibilities of the piano-player, and that bad demonstrating in public does more harm than a competitor's damning in private.

H. E.

PNEUMATIC PLAYING AND THE CHOICE OF MUSIC.

AFTER some experience of the piano-machine, most of its adherents come to feel that it has a will of its own. They find that some things "will not go," although they can make it play some other things very well. Its musical tastes and distastes are rather miscellaneous, and to the uncertain and ephemeral judgment of its human owner they may seem, at times, a little arbitrary and stubborn; but though he may not agree with them, he cannot alter them (that is for the makers, and the future, perhaps), and the most he can do is to puzzle out the causes, half musical, half mechanical, which underlie these otherwise unaccountable discriminations, and so to piece together a working compromise between his own musical interests and the inflexible elements in the performance of the machine.

There are two sets of puzzles for any such enquiry: Why is it that the machine can be made to play some piano pieces so much better than others?—and, What about arrangements of non-pianoforte music?

As to arrangements and transcriptions—to take this question first—the leading principles seem fairly clear. Almost anything can be played on the piano, in a way; and the arrangement, if it is a good one, will show at least the main outlines of the original structure of the music. The piano version of an orchestral work is often compared to the steel engraving of a picture—the form remains, abstracted from the variety of colours, or of instrumental tone-qualities. This is only roughly true. Certainly the colours are gone; but so, too, are many important points in the form of the design, because the effect of give-and-take between the different instruments is lost—and lost on the piano-machine (with its limited accents) even more than in an ordinary

piano performance by two or four hands. No doubt the pneumatic player can strike more than even four handfuls of notes at once—can, indeed, reach any number of keys in any part of the compass, and carry on half-a-dozen runs and shakes together in as many different octaves ; but this musical-box brilliance and range is not easily turned to æsthetic account.* As the Musical Critic of *The Times* has said, in a recent paper on the Pianoforte Duet, its characteristics “are akin to those of the orchestra, only infinitely more circumscribed, because, though extremely complicated contrapuntal movement is possible, colour is almost entirely absent ; and in the circumstances it was not to be expected that the form should develop into anything greater” (than the pianoforte solo), “since there was nothing greater for it to develop into.” And he adds : “ Many arrangements, such as Mendelssohn’s version of his own music to *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, or the adaptation of Ravel’s *Daphnis et Chloë*, to take two examples only, are quite perfect as pianoforte music ; and to many ears the symphonies of Schumann sound considerably better as duets than in their orchestral form. But, taken as a whole, the value of transcriptions is educational and not artistic”—or, at best, a compromise between the two, and, at worst, a failure in both ; e.g., the Larghetto of Beethoven’s Violin Concerto—surely one of the most symmetrical movements in music—becomes an almost pointless monotony in a transcription for piano, or even for piano and violin, since, with the disappearance of the contrasts between woodwind and strings, etc., the whole balance of the work is destroyed. And, apart from the balance of the form, some music seems inseparable from the characteristics of the particular instruments for which it was written. For, whether or not there is such a thing as “inevitability” in art, at

* I once made for myself a music-roll with an exactly literal transcription of every note in the *Sequentia* of Mozart’s Requiem Mass. The result was like nothing I had ever heard in my life (and I had heard the Mass) ; but I rather liked it.

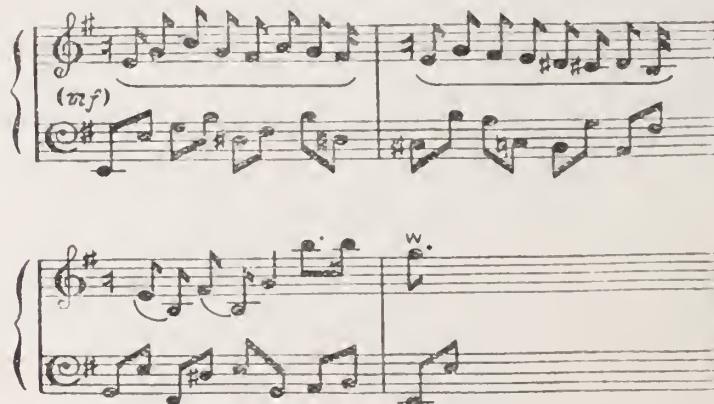
any rate there are degrees of appropriateness ; and if a concertina were the only instrument available, it might be better, for instance, to leave the " Moonlight " sonata quite unattempted, even in the most ingenious transcription.*

In one of his contributions to this Magazine, Mr. Bertram Smith remarked that he regards the piano-maeline as " an orehestral instrument "—as espeially suitable for playing transcriptions of orehestral music. He expressly refrained from aeeounting for his opinion. I eannot agree with him, but I think I understand what he meant ; and may not the explanation be that, in general, the chief diffieulty of pneumatic playing is to get satisfactory effects in involved passages—and a good piano transcription of an orehestral work is always in the nature of a simplification ; and, in particular, it is not easy, in playing pianoforte musie (espeially, of course, with non-aceented rolls), to bring out a theme of single notes against a full accompaniment—while the transcribers of orchestral musie (and especially the transcribers for music-rolls) take care to announee the themes in two or three, or even four or five, octaves at once ; so that Mr. Bertram Snith can eount upon hearing the great tunes distinctly, whatever may become of the inner parts ?

The mention of inner parts brings us to the crux of the seeond question—upon what principle can various pianoforte works be distinguished as good or bad for the purpose of pneumatic playing ? The distinguished critie, already quoted, has observed that for many people music is all top, or, at most, all top and bottom ; and that a difficult aehieve-ment in the art of listening is to hear inner parts distinctly, and yet to hear them as *less distinct* than the main theme, with its bass. Much is required of a listener ; but the performance itself is not a good one unless it helps him in every

* I do not wish to add concertina-players to the ranks of my enemies. At least one charming piece of music has been written expressly for their instrument (by Mozart, k.v. 356) ; though I have only succeeded in hearing it played on a piano.

way compatible with the wholeness of the music, by bringing out the proportionate parts of the composition, without false suggestions or suppressions. Now it is obvious that a theme—generally speaking, the “top” part—needs an accent of its own ; but when that is secured the requirements of a good musical performance are not yet exhausted, as the commercial advertisements would have us believe. If there are inner parts, and if they are lumped together indiscriminately with the bass on a reduced tone (no matter whether or not this reduction, as a whole, admits of gradation, relatively to the theme), confusion will overwhelm, not only the inner parts, but the bass as well. I must admit that I was slow in applying this rather elementary truism to the puzzles of the piano-machine, although I had recognized very soon, like every one else, that the machine could not be induced to play certain music at all satisfactorily, and that this disability seemed to be connected in some way with the degree of complexity of the music itself. The clue, in my case, was given by the following Ground of Purcell’s, in E minor, which I translated into a music-roll for myself about eighteen months ago :—



The ground bass is repeated without variation every three bars, but with different themes above it ; and, throughout,

there are never more than two notes, and as a rule only one, sounded at any one moment. I found that, except for slight differences of touch, I could play this small masterpiece in all respects as well, with my piano-machine, as a friend of mine, an amateur pianist of the first rank, had played it to me. With this clue I collated the instances I had noted of rolls that went particularly well or badly, and I found that they all conformed, more or less, to a general principle, *viz.*, the possibility or impossibility of getting a clear contrast between a theme *and its bass*, without confusing either of the two with inner parts or accompaniments of any other sort.

Most piano music, unlike Purcell's Ground, has a middle, as well as a top and bottom; and a good pianist, without distorting or disintegrating, will contrive to indicate the differences between the three. How does he manage to make these indications? It is contended by some, and denied by others, that a fine pianist, by varying his touch, can produce different qualities of tone (genuine differences, though not necessarily audible except to musically trained, or especially sensitive, ears) as well as quantitative degrees of loudness or softness. However this may be, the position of the piano-machine is clear, since, whether or not a pianist can evoke different qualities of tone from a piano, it is quite certain that no pneumatic player as yet on the market can do so. Any particular piano-machine has one way, and only one way, of touching the keys (or the hammers); and so, for the present purpose, the question of the effect of varying touches does not arise. If a bass is to be distinguished, in the playing, from inner parts as well as from its theme, the piano-machine can make this distinction, if at all, in terms of *quantity* of tone only, *i.e.*, by means of three different degrees of loudness simultaneously. Luckily there are now some machines with which these three simultaneous accents are possible, though the makers seem to have overlooked the powers of

their own instruments in this regard; I have not met with any rolls in which they have accented more than one part at a time. But, for myself, I have accented the "fundamental bass" in many compositions, as well as the theme, so that bass and unaccented inner parts are still distinguished, in the playing, when I press down the ordinary bass "half-blow" stop, which, in my machine, serves to differentiate accented treble and accented bass.* I have found this a very great improvement in many cases—for example, in the Ariette variations from Beethoven's last sonata, which I had previously accented to the full, for a different type of machine, but had given up at last, in despair of a tolerable result.

Nevertheless, I still think that the piano-machine is at its best with the less voluminous† music of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century masters. And one very simple consideration goes some way to confirm this observation, and to account for the fact. A heavily scored movement means a music-roll full of perforations; every perforation involves an additional draught on the suction-force at command; and where these draughts are copious and continuous, delicacy of phrasing and accent must suffer, to some extent, however adroit one's feet may be in the use of the pedals. That is another reason why my Ground of Purcell's "goes" better than even my three-part-accented Ariette from Beethoven, Op. 111. To me, personally, this conclusion is not unsatisfactory, for I do not know any greater composer than Mozart; and much as I like Beethoven's third period, I prefer his first. If I take such a movement as the Introduction to Mozart's

* For a full account of the method, see my "Strong and Weak Points" paper, in the June *P.P.R.*

† Of course I do not mean to suggest that greater volume of scoring is the chief difference between Eighteenth Century and contemporary music, but it is the difference which chiefly concerns the pneumatic player; and as to the other differences, change (except in the way of machinery) is not necessarily progress. Technically, I suppose, Bach is not inferior to Debussy. In spirit and in charm Mozart and the Mozartian Beethoven can give points to Chopin and to Brahms.

Fantasia Sonata and accent it for two degrees of tone in most places, and, in some, for three, I find that my machine can play it almost as well as I could wish ; and so with many of Bach's and Purcell's Suites, or with smaller works by Byrd and Scarlatti. For music of this kind (which happens to be what I like best) the pneumatic player, with its latest developments, seems to me very nearly adequate, in point of quantitative accents and phrasing. Touch, with the contrasts which depend on it, is another matter ; though, to say frankly, I think it is a matter the importance of which is more often exaggerated than ignored among musical people. By comparison with the unforced, sustained, and flexible beauty of tone to be heard from a violin or a horn, the pianoforte, at its best, seems an instrument of convenience rather than of music at its finest. But, to my mind, it is equally mistaken, on the one side, to deny that different effects of touch really exist in good piano-playing by hand at the present time, and, on the other side, to refuse to hope that these delicate variations of tone-quality may be obtained and brought under control by pneumatic means—in the piano-machine of the future.*

J. H. MORRISON.

* As so many rolls are still issued without side-accent perforations of any sort, it may be just worth noting that, for the purposes of the bass and treble stops or levers, the best results can be got with compositions in keys, such as C, where the sub-dominant falls within two or three notes above the dividing line (other things being equal—which they seldom are, in music).

A FALSE STANDARD.

THE supporters of the Piano-Player have been following for the last few years, with an almost breathless interest, its steady and rapid advance towards the goal of perfect, polished and sensitive playing. It is safe to say that it has already achieved far more than seemed possible in its earliest days. The most hardened and contemptuous of its opponents are not seldom being converted to the cause and forced to recognize the fine quality of its performance, in its best and newest forms. There is still, no doubt, some ground to cover: is it not possible that even after it has left the human pianist behind there may not be room for larger technique, finer shades and more delicate effects? It is difficult to see a definite limit. But in the meantime I suppose that all reasonable and unprejudiced people, with a sufficient knowledge of the subject, admit that the more modern Players are competing directly and most effectively with the best pianists. Perhaps it would be a fair statement to put it that they are capable of effects that no pianist can possibly perform in certain directions, and in others are not yet on a level with the highest performance of human hands. It is no doubt right that we should set this standard,—the highest,—to judge the Piano-Player by. Those who believe in its future are quite prepared to accept the challenge of the leading pianist. His work is the goal at which they have always aimed and are still aiming, though, as I have already hinted, it is more than probable in the time to come that they will leave him behind and outdistance him in ways that have not yet been realized. This must be so, for if the pianist suffered under no other handicap he is at least restricted by the grave handicap of his ten fingers, whereas the Player starts out with a finger for every note. But while it is right that they should live up to this level of comparison and fight

their battles upon this ground, is it necessary—in order to prove the overwhelming case for the Piano-Player—always to insist upon it ?

What I mean is this. It has always seemed to me that the opponent of the movement has too confidently pinned his faith to the touch of a Paderewski or a Pachmann and called upon the Player-Pianist to reproduce it. It is as if he said :—"There it is. That is how Pachmann plays a Chopin Nocturne. If your machine cannot give me the same poetic feeling and dreamy delicacy of tone, it has failed. There is nothing more to be said. We have dismissed mechanical players once and for all."

Now it seems to me that there is a great deal more to be said. I should be inclined to reply: "All in good time we shall be able to give you exactly what you ask for. Even if we can't do it now, you will not have long to wait. But here and now we can give you all that is wanted to prove our case,—and more."

There are times when one really grows impatient of this attitude that insists upon that final test,—not because one is afraid of it, but because it so calmly ignores all other tests : the test of the school-girl who has been practising three hours a day for years and has never arrived : the test of the great dumb host of pianos all over the world, wasting their sweetness on the desert air because no one has the skill to play them : the supreme test of the real lover of music whose experience had been miserably hampered and confined for lack of an executant. When I look at the thing in its broadest issues I am sometimes tempted to say that I simply don't care if the Player can really compete with Busoni or not. (I know very well that this is a horrible heresy.) It is all the same to me whether it can satisfy the eclectic demands of a small group of musical critics and piano specialists or not. For my part it satisfies me, and in satisfying me—for I am

not wholly unintelligent in musical matters—I know that it is satisfying tens of thousands of other people. I have put the case extremely and I suppose I have displayed my own ignorance. But there is a world of truth in what I say. To the vast majority of people the Piano-Player *has* arrived, it *has* achieved just exactly what was demanded of it. It is of not the least importance if it gets no further and does no more than it has done, for it has already given us what we want.

That Average Man—myself—the man who supplies the steady demand for new Players, who is buying them all over the country and using them daily with zeal and enthusiasm is rather apt to be lost sight of in this controversy. It may be true that he does not appreciate the finest piano playing at its full value : it may be true that his ear is not fine enough, nor his experience large enough to be able to discourse upon different renderings by different masters. It may even be true that he doesn't much care : that he is not easily tempted forth to attend a piano recital, however distinguished the pianist may be. Perhaps he is just a very ordinary person, who wants to get into his slippers in the evening and light his pipe and settle down with his wife in the drawing-room. All the same, he is the man who is buying the Piano-Player : he has quite enough musical feeling to play it to his own satisfaction and he has no intention of giving public performances (for well he knows the truth that it is generally much more fun to play it than to listen to it), and he is getting down from the library box after box of records and revelling in an enormous choice of music. I am not at all sure that he is not the man who counts in this matter. These others who are wrangling about points of perfection and imperfection have always been in the thick of music. They know all about it any way. The Player is to them an interesting variation, no doubt, and of value in its way, but it hasn't

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added much to their experience. Whereas in my own case, to go no further, the Player has, without going outside the radius of the pipe and slippers, multiplied my experience many-fold and opened up all manner of new avenues.

Is it all second-rate music that we are making,—I and all those others,—and therefore of no account ? I do not think that my argument can be dismissed on those grounds. We would not like, perhaps, to be overheard and criticised by those who know all about it. But as I have said, we have no intention of giving public performances ; and conning over the works of the great masters time and again, as we are now able to do, I have an idea that we are getting pretty close to the heart of the matter. I know that many of us regret that we were born a generation too soon, and look back upon long, pitiful, unproductive years in our childhood when we were taking piano lessons which, with all our labour, never brought us within sight of the golden opportunity that is ours to-day. Also, I have a very shrewd idea that the way to get on terms with a musical composition is not to listen to it, so much as to play it, in some form, for oneself.

Perhaps it is not, after all, the playing of a Concerto at the Queen's Hall that represents the true achievement of the Piano-Player. It may be that its widest scope and most productive field is in more humble and private places, where it has performed the miracle of making all the world articulate.

I do not think we need worry about the quality of our efforts so long as they are earnest and intelligent. After all, are we producing any better effect, all things considered, or worse,—do you suppose ?—with a Mozart Sonata, than the composer did upon his harpsichord ?

BERTRAM SMITH.

**FOR THE
TEACHER OF PLAYER-PIANISM.**

SIMULTANEOUSLY with the discovery that the player-piano is an artistic instrument and that the executive and interpretative control of it is consequently a matter of genuine art, a second discovery was made, *viz.*, that player-pianism provides scope for the exercising of the talents of the teacher. But for one reason or another this second discovery has not yet fructified abundantly.

I think the chief of these reasons rests with teacher-musicians. Many persons feel the need of expert and cultured guidance, but few seem able to offer it. The life and work of the average musician does not fit him for the task. Until the advent of our instrument, musical instruction was a slow and minutely graded process, a period of at least three years being provided for the elementary stages, and anything from five to seven being devoted to specialised and finishing work. The teacher therefore had no need normally for encyclopaedic knowledge or for all-embracing interests and sympathies. He directed his pupils with an almost sub-conscious ease, much as he steers his bicycle. Not so the teacher of the new art of player-pianism. Students here are generally men and women of culture and experience, skilled by personal experience in life and in the meaning of art, and able to approach music, not by the minute pathways of major common chords and five-finger exercises, but by the spacious highways of Beethoven sonatas and Wagner operas. The teacher who undertakes the task of helping such can work by no rule-of-thumb method. The special individuality which is to be considered in the case of young beginners in pianoforte or violin playing becomes here most vividly pronounced. The nature of the adult is as deep-rooted as the oak. He is, for good or ill, a *made* being, and can appropriate artistic matter only

in the manner congenial to himself. Moreover, the impersonal circumstances of the case are different. An intelligent adult, given fair practice, can master the player-piano in a year or (at most) eighteen months. His training therefore has to be correspondingly compact, and his teacher correspondingly alert and active. The difficulties of the art of teaching player-pianism are incomparable with those of everyday musical instruction. They can be circumvented in no sub-conscious or uniform manner. The teacher cannot guide his pupil as he guides his bicycle. He is as the steersman of a small vessel in a heavy sea, with dangerous rocks in the vicinity whose existence he can only vaguely apprehend until he is almost on top of them ; whereas the average teacher, if he ever ventures off the green and smiling earth, is compelled to do so only when the sea is calm and the soundings safely charted.

The foregoing is rather strongly expressed ; but experience proves it to be quite unexaggerated. The successful player-piano teacher is a man or woman of wide sympathies and well-developed mentality. The average provincial music-teacher is the reverse. Hence the delay in the established musical profession arousing itself to its new opportunities, and hence also the need for keen and ambitious beginners to adapt themselves to the new demand upon their services.

I purpose giving here a few rough suggestions for the guidance of the latter.

First and foremost, and above all other considerations, the adult beginner in player-pianism does not need (at the outset, at any rate) the smaller works of musical art. If he asks you to teach him Bach, he does not want the Inventions, or the "Little Preludes," or even the French Suites. He wants the Italian Concerto, the Chromatic Fantasie and Fugue, the Fantasia in C minor, or Liszt's or Tausig's or D'Albert's arrangements of the organ-works. And if he asks

you for Beethoven, he wants the larger sonatas, not the Bagatelles or the simple sonatas of Op. 49, Op. 14, Op. 79, and the like. A stranger needs to be shown first the greater wonders of a land, not the smaller. If you wish to demonstrate the grandeur of English poetry, you reconstruct *Hamlet* or *Macbeth* or *Lear*, not the lyrics of Crashaw or even the odes of Keats. And if you desire to satisfy your newly awakened sensitiveness to architecture, you bathe yourself in the immensity of cathedrals rather than in such adjuncts as marble statuary and oak-screens. Art exists for us primarily, not in the detail, but in the mass. It is the whole of a fugue or symphony that thrills us, not the wonderful economy of the invertible counterpoints or the fine balance of the responsive subjects. And so the player-pianist, set out with a ready means of apprehending all of music which is reducible to the pianoforte, and at the same time with a means which removes from his observation most of the microscopical beauties of the art, needs the cathedrals and epics of musical composition, and not the statues and sonnets. The latter will fall into place eventually ; but he who first trains himself to see only the minor things will never rise to a true vision of the major, and the young teacher will be of no use to his pupils so long as he confines them to the smaller, or more deliberately instructive, emanations of our composers' minds.

Then, secondly, the teacher must not at the commencement worry himself or his pupil over points of ultra-refinement. Breadth is the first essential. A meticulous observance of *nuance* is undesirable. You may keep your pupil for ten minutes engaged in an agitating struggle for a certain *sforzato* or *ritardando*, and probably secure it ; but in the meantime you are causing him to miss something far more vital. To revert to the former idea, you and your pupil must stand well back from your palace of sound, and apprehend it in its main aspects. You must for the present be concerned with

the nature and responsive balance of its constituent parts, with its fundamental rhythms, with its sequences of emotional stress and relaxation, with the orderly progression of its physical material from start to finish. Not for you yet is the pencil work of the painter or the mysterious chiselling of the sculptor. These will come later. Indeed, if you work correctly, these more minute qualities will reveal themselves without wearisome effort on your own part. The *sforzato* or *ritardando* which you agitated your two selves over will, so soon as your student realizes its *raison d'être*, come into perfect being apparently of its own accord. The player-piano is at one with perfect art-works in this. When finished, the matter seems to have done itself. A Bach fugue or a Schubert song seem born of the air, so little do they show signs of human labour. A finished performance upon the player-piano has the same atmosphere of ease and spontaneity. You will help your pupil to realize this according to the measure of your gradual approach to the detail of the piece in hand.

Thirdly (and, in view of the limits of space, lastly), you must work with very varied material. A pianoforte student learns each year an average of half-a-dozen studies, two or three classical works, and a few lighter pieces. Often he or she spends a season of study upon one great work. Not infrequently a pianist's repertory is less than two dozen compositions all told. Your player-pianist should be helped by you to grasp and hold at least a dozen works a month. This seems a good deal; but it becomes very modest when you recollect that a student should listen to an unfamiliar work every day, and that (given a command of the pedals) nearly one-half of the available literature of the player-piano can be temporarily regarded as material for unprepared performance. Most students of pianoforte playing devote a set time to the practise of "sight-reading." You must help your pupil to do the same, with this special modification

—his “ sight-reading ” should cover the same piece (or pieces) on each day of the week intervening between the lessons, and that the material devoted to this purpose should be simpler than the material set out for practice, and as diverse in spirit as is possible.

In a subsequent issue of the *P.P.R.* I hope to give a list of useful teaching matter, grouped tentatively in weekly sections, and designed to cover the first year's work of an adult player-pianist. For the present, I ask you to look at the following group of titles, which represents the practice-material of a student in his 11th week—this student being a busy professional man in his thirties', and experienced in music only so far as assiduous concert-going makes possible :—

For special practice, Beethoven's sonata in E flat, Op. 27, No. 1.

For recreation, Liszt's “ Hungarian Rhapsody,” No. 14.

In revision, Bach's Fantasia in C minor, and Beethoven's Thirty-two Variations in C minor.

In repertory (the product of the five preceding weeks), Liszt's Twelfth Rhapsody, Mendelssohn's “ Scotch ” Sonata (the finale only), and Schumann's “ Papillons.”

SYDNEY GREW.

THE LEADING PLAYERS DESCRIBED.

V.—THE PISTONOLA.

In the Boyd Pistonola player-piano we have a new type of player action differing from all those previously described, which are constructed on the bellows principle. As the name suggests, in the Pistonola action pistons take the place of bellows.

Referring to the inventors of the various types of piano-player on the market, the makers of the Pistonola say:—“They seem all to have been working in one groove, and of recent years there have been no radical changes whatsoever, whilst improvements have been confined to points of detail.”

The inventors of the Pistonola, it appears, are two young English engineers, who started *de novo*: that is, they are not at all in touch with the piano-player industry, and were barely familiar with the devices already in use. The task they set themselves (five years ago) was to construct a player action capable of the widest control but, at the same time, of such slight dimensions as to fit into any ordinary piano without affecting the instrument’s tone or touch when played by hand. In their judgment the piston as a pneumatic agent served their purpose better than the bellows.

The Pistonola is an all-metal player, taking any rolls of standard make and working, it is claimed, with a tension of air twenty-five times greater than that usually employed in existing players. It has nothing in common with any other type of player, except that it is operated by suction.

The pistons, occupying less space than bellows, fit into the normal size piano. They are direct-acting and self-lubricating. They are fitted in a single row of metal cylinders, in which, being made of a special composition of graphite of glass-like surface, they work with ease and silence. The

Pistonola's air chambers are so small that a metal block $4\frac{3}{4}$ in. wide and slightly less than $1\frac{1}{2}$ in. deep can contain nine complete striking pneumatics. By the piston system, it is claimed, absolute air-tightness is achieved, because the metal valves are incapable of leaking, as they are equally incapable of clogging or perishing. The fact, moreover, that they are operated by a higher tension of air than usual with other players, makes for "a sharp and clear attack, an instantaneous repetition, and an almost incredible degree of responsiveness."

The pedals, while creating the suction, also give the performer control over the reproduction to a very high degree of sensitiveness and, so the makers allege, the experienced performer is less than ordinarily dependent on automatic means of expression. He can obtain a brilliant interpretation by the intelligent use of his feet, aided only by the tempo lever and the sustaining pedal. There are, however, other expression devices which he can bring into use. The Modulist is an attachment which accents the melody, and can be used with any make of accented rolls. The notes of the main theme are brought into prominence, no matter where they lie. Even the leading, or any note, in a chord can be selected by the Modulist for special emphasis.

The Crescodant is a device which, by the mere movement of a lever, enables a beginner to give an artistic rendering of any composition. By its use mistakes in pedalling are automatically corrected.

It is interesting to note, in conclusion, the makers' belief that "this truly wonderful invention (*i.e.*, the Pistonola as a whole) will entirely revolutionize the piano-player industry, and in time supersede all other types."

The Boyd Pistonola piano is sold mainly in two models, costing £74 12s. and £84 net respectively.

POPULAR MUSIC.

V.

THE object of the present paper is to direct attention to two master-works of music, the peculiar character of which makes them of distinctly "popular" value, *viz.*, Weber's D minor sonata and Chopin's first work for pianoforte, the Rondo in C minor, Op. 1.

I.

Weber was a younger contemporary of the great classical master, Beethoven; but his genius was different, being of a romantic cast, and consequently causing him to write in a more immediately attractive manner. This sonata therefore shows us the type of popular music a hundred years ago, of a class between the commonplace and the ideal.

The first movement is a particularly honest and straightforward composition. It contains no subtlety. Indeed, the reverse is the case, for the whole style of the music makes it a genuine, whole-hearted abandonment to the most immediate joys of the art. The main idea is vigorous (Weber labels it *allegro feroce*); but the second subject is one of those long-drawn, graceful, half-operatic melodies for which he is famous, and which anyone will readily recognize who is familiar with the *Oberon* or *Der Freischütz* overtures.

The performer must maintain throughout a sense of the fundamental march-rhythm which supports the movement. There are a few cross-accents, and many instances of sustained or lengthy notes; but nowhere is the dominating rhythm seriously disturbed. A satisfactory reading can be given with the unaided pedalling (except that here and there the tempo-lever may be used for the purpose of confirming a cadence or enhancing a climax). With regard to the second subject (which appears first in the 57th bar), it should be

noted that the composer has directed it to be played *dolce*, *tranquillo e lusingando*, i.e., sweetly, quietly and caressingly.

This second subject is of great importance (as is the case in all sonatas), and must be carefully attended to and looked for. The player here can scarcely miss the entry of the subject : for it occurs when the loud mass of the tone has sunk into quietness, and it is heralded by a number of soft single notes.

In the 6th bar from the opening of the movement are no notes at all, that bar being given over to an abrupt silence. The bar preceding it must be played with extreme vigour.

The supreme test of a sonata is the slow movement : for there the need for deep emotion and lofty thought is pre-eminent. The present sonata fails utterly in this respect. Its second movement is not a sonata *adagio* in any sense of the term. It is a bright, jolly, freely moving *andante con moto*. Its sentiment is of the theatre. The player will do well to pour it out with some clearly defined mental picture to influence him : for if ever a composer wrote abstract music with stage conventionalities in his mind, Weber was the man, and the writing of this movement was the occasion. It is as pleasing as a bit of good rag-time, and scarcely (it seems to the present writer) more dignified or ambitious. The piece only needs to be known to be very popular in the player-piano world.

The case is different with the third (and last) movement. Weber is here in his element. He never had a peer in the art of writing brilliant rondos of a *moto perpetuo* type. The present rondo is almost unique. It is certainly of symphonic proportions, well contrasted, supplied with captivating melodies (several of them would make the fortune of a musical comedy), and unflaggingly animated.

Its place is, for one reason or another, perhaps more fittingly the *Students' Page* of this *Review* ; but players whose interests are non-studious will not find the piece impossible

to play. Its rhythm is a little obscure in the opening phrases ; but from the 21st bar onward the greater part of the music can be made to play itself.

The player-pianist must remember one thing in performing the finale to Weber's D minor sonata. The composer is not concerned with deep thought, or with passionate feeling, or with any disturbing element whatsoever. He is out for a musical holiday, and thoroughly secures it.

II.

Weber was an acknowledged master when he produced his sonatas. Chopin, on the other hand, was but a beginner when he wrote his first rondo. In the Weber we have the product of maturity, in the Chopin the reverse.

The Chopin, therefore (apart from its own attractive qualities), is useful in musical circles such as the present, because of its power of demonstrating the ideas and desires of the musicians who followed Weber. The generation between 1815 and 1830 seems to have left the theatre as severely alone as the symphony-hall. Certainly the music it produced is mostly of the chamber or *salon* type. No more striking contrast could be found than between the highly-coloured stage-painting of Weber's sonata-rondo and the refined tinting of Chopin's piece. The former takes us to a place where breadth and noise are natural concomitants, the latter to a place where bustle and dust and confusion are all unknown.

No remarks are needed to make this Parisian composition clear to the player. It is as straightforward as a Viennese waltz. All one has to attend to is the production of that tender and delicate brilliancy which is the special property of the pianoforte. Played intelligently, such pieces captivate everybody, and will probably do so so long as we look to music for delightful refreshment as well as for help in spiritual matters of deep philosophical import.

THE AUTOMATIC VIOLIN.

READERS will be interested in a description of a piano-player with a violin solo arrangement. I saw and heard one in London some time ago. It is a very ingenious contrivance, wholly mechanical, the motive power being pneumatics driven by electricity.

An electric piano—or the Welte Mignon, or any other known entirely automatic piano—will serve as an illustration for the chief part. Call to mind one or other of these instruments to begin with.

On the top of the piano is a cabinet in which is placed three violins in such a position that they can easily be tuned—horizontal, neck downwards, and fixed at the neck. One faces north, one east, one south, say; bridges outwards. The bow is a circular revolving band of horsehair continually moving quite close to the strings.

One fiddle has a set of 16 fingers working on the E string, one a set of 10 working on the A string, the other 10 fingers adjusted to the D string. In the present stage of development the G string is not used.

The fingers are little pads of felt on wood stops, attached to striking pneumatics (small collapsible bellows).

Perforations in the roll operate the piano and the violin fingers in the ordinary way.

Gradations of tone on the violins are obtained by a tilting closer to the bow of the violin, and by variation in the speed at which the bow revolves.

Consider for a moment the accuracy and delicacy of mechanism necessary to perform all the movements governing time, tone, phrasing, vibrato, etc., as heard in ordinary violin and piano music, and then you will get an idea of the great difficulties that had to be overcome.

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In the instrument which I heard the musical results were, if not perfect, yet quite tolerable, and very interesting.

I liked the violin part better than the piano accompaniment, although the piano was in no way to blame. For hotels, hydros and similar places this combination will doubtless prove a means of gentle entertainment. For some years I have been concerned with pneumatic players and devices of all kinds, but for sheer mechanical ingenuity, devilry almost, I have not yet seen its equal.

So many delicate movements may be done mechanically by pneumatics that herein lies a danger to the ordinary player-piano. The lasting interest of the piano-player as against, say, the musical box, polyphone, or gramophone, lies in the amount of work left for the performer—the scope for his individuality.

Let us hope that in the attempt to make player-pianos fool-proof the makers will not borrow too many purely mechanical means of production and so kill the personal element.

The instrument described is the Hupfeld Phonolist-Violina fitted to the Rönisch piano.

E.

CHILDREN'S MUSIC.**VI.**

Two or three people have hinted to me that you would all like to know something about the very commencement of pianoforte music. I hope they are right ; for you ought to wish for such knowledge. None of us, however old and clever and experienced we become, can do without a study of the origins of great things. It is all very well to take and love these great things in their finished state. The wonderful men who gave us (for instance) the mighty musical compositions of the 18th and 19th centuries are the chief members of their line, and without them we should be as nothing ; but they became what they were simply and solely because a huge army of men had been working away, year after year, in inspired preparation, and because they (the mighty men) came (like the reapers in autumn) in what we call the " fulness of time." Now if we want to realize the beauty of autumn, we must know something about the spring—and, indeed, something about the winter which came before the spring. Of course, if we have no experience of the autumn of an art, we shall not be able to make much out of its winter and spring. That is to say, if we are ignorant of the mighty musicians of the 18th and 19th centuries, we shall not comprehend the beauty and significance of the pioneers belonging to the 16th and 17th centuries. For (this is most important) the observation of art has to proceed backwards. We have to fix ourselves on the summit, as it were, of Bach fugues and Beethoven sonatas, and thence survey the level of rising land that has led up to that summit. When we have made our survey, we can easily and safely descend to examine closely any detail of the surrounding country which seems most promising ; and in the same manner can we return, carrying with us something which will make the summit still more wonderful. That something, if nothing else, will

prove to be an added power of *imagination*. Out of imagination comes *sympathy*, and sympathy is the one cause in this world of good and beauty. No person of sympathetic imagination is ever knowingly cruel, because he can place himself in the position of the other one whom he is hurting. It is the ignorant people who do mischief, both in art and in life. When you grow up, you will believe with me that wilful ignorance is the unforgivable sin we read about. If all musicians could understand music in the light of its history, there would be a tremendous leap forward. It is the failure of musicians to see all along a line that causes delay and error. Just think what harm a perverted judgment does! I remember once hearing a famous concert-pianist say that Beethoven was a lunatic when (a few years before he died) he wrote his great sonata in B flat. Think, now, what that would mean to a young student who (as young students do) hung upon the words of his teacher as inspired judgments. He would have gone away with the impression that Beethoven had failed in the close of his life, and perhaps for a long while would have looked at the superb works of that composer's middle life as examples of labour destined never to bear perfect fruit. Of course, the pianist who said this was influenced by his dreadful ignorance, and his remark was in consequence valueless; but the young student would not have known this, and so the mischief would have been done. The same thing is happening all around us every day. There are thousands of really earnest player-pianists who make endless errors and misjudgments because of their ignorance. Those of us who write for the *P.P.R.* are very anxious to help them to destroy their ignorance and so to make their knowledge and understanding of music worthy the marvellous creations of such men as Bach and Beethoven. This is a hard task, for however much we ourselves learn and imagine, we are continually bumping up against unexpected corners and walls of ignorance. The whole business seems a sort of

groping forward in the dark, the light being mostly behind us. I can assure you I have bruised my own shins more than once this past two or three years ! But the further we get, the more safely we seem able to move, and the more likely we are to be able to help those who (born later, or else fixed by fate in some other walk of life than music) have not managed to get so far along the road as we have. Yes, it is by knowledge of the beginnings of things that you may develop sufficient imaginative sympathy to understand them fully in their maturity ; and so (to finish this big paragraph) I am very glad to know that the children who play the player-piano are anxious to see who first started what Bach and Beethoven finished.

But how am I to make the matter clear ? It is no use my mentioning names and dates, or referring you to published music. What you want is matter already set out in perforated rolls, and so available for immediate use. There are over a hundred pieces of ancient pianoforte music which you could buy for use at the piano, but only a dozen or so which are converted to our own particular use. I don't know whether *The Children's Page* is ever read by the secret, mysterious personages who sit in consultation upon what shall and what shall not be arranged ; but if it is, I wish we could persuade them to cut about twenty-five more pieces of pre-Bach music. Such music is very simple, and the task would not be expensive. Even if it were, little by little people would take it up, and in the end the investment would be profitable. Perhaps, if I made an earnest request on the part of all young folk who are growing up in appreciation of the player-piano, the manufacturers would respond to it. Anyway, I do so ; and hereby express my personal belief that it is the duty of those who supply us with our rolls to see to it that we have just a few more examples of the music which stands at the root of modern instrumental art. And

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I add one further remark in the name of these children of mine. It is a dreadful thing to fail in doing your duty!

Now to get to the music. So far as man has yet been able to trace backward, there has never been a period when things had not begun, and certainly there has always been music. But we do know that pure instrumental music had no existence in modern Western Europe previous to the age of Queen Elizabeth. People used to sing in the Middle Ages. By the time of the Renaissance they could sing very well, and many of their "forms" were so complex and elaborate that we of to-day find it no easy task to sing the pieces for ourselves. As you know, the Renaissance was an age when true natural knowledge and sensible scientific enquiry began to interest people again (all through the Dark Ages and most of the Middle Ages people had not worried much about external things), and so the Renaissance saw the first grand development in the creation of musical instruments. As soon as composers had these instruments placed before them, they began writing for them. But, of course, at first they did not know just how to write instrumental music. They did not apprehend the genius or natures of the strange new appliances, and for a long while could only put down notes for the fingers in the way they had been putting down notes for the voices of the chorus. After awhile, however, they found that they could on the instruments run and skip and jump about in a very fresh and jolly fashion ; and when they began to write in a style of big chords, rapid scales, and brilliant little turns and shakes, they soon developed a true instrumental style, and so began to write, not an imitation of vocal music or dance music, but genuinely instrumental music. This was about the year 1600. Bach was born in 1685. His instrumental genius was perfected by about 1710 ; and so you see that in little over a hundred years instrumental music (*i.e.*, music for organ, violin, and that forerunner of the pianoforte named the " harpsichord ") came to its kingdom.

I think I can do no better this month than explain to you two or three available pieces by our own Elizabethan composers. Next month I will step farther afield, and also show you some works by our Carolingian composers ; and perhaps the month after I will tell you how you can trace these immature 16th and 17th-century compositions in the mature creations of Bach. Let us hope that by December the kind hearts of the arrangers will have been moved to give us a few more rolls ! I shall give a list of these desired pieces in a month or two.

First, then, you can play two Pavanas of Byrde and Gibbons (both these men lived in the age of Shakespeare). The "Pavana" was a dance. Before instrumental music arose, people used to sing a musical accompaniment to dancing, and consequently the first pianoforte dances are a little vocal in style. But if you put a good and intelligent spirit into your treatment of these old-world pieces, you will discover a surprisingly animated character in them. Byrde's Pavana is called "The Earle of Salisbury," and Gibbons' "The Lord of Salisbury." The first is in binary form (that is, it is made up of two sentences, each of 8-bars length), the second is in ternary form (that is, it is made up of three sentences : (1) of 18 bars, (2) of 16 bars, (3) of 20 bars). You cannot help but see where the different sentences end, for the "punctuation" is as clear in the cadences as it is in a Shakespeare speech. Composers used to decorate their music very lavishly in those days ; but you will find on your *Pianola* edition of these two dances that the music is set out twice on the same roll, once without the decoration and once with.

I must not forget to tell you very clearly that the two sentences in the Byrde piece are repeated, and that you thus get sentence (*a*) twice before sentence (*b*) appears.

There is another pavana available for you. This is the "Lachrymæ Pavan" of John Dowland. (Ask your school

teacher what "lachrymæ" means, and ask him also to read you Shakespeare's sonnet where Dowland is mentioned. If he cannot tell you either, write and ask me, and I will tell you next month.) This pavan is different from the others. It consists of *three* pavanes all grouped together, just as the Haydn sonata you learned some time ago consisted of separate movements grouped into a whole. The first pavane is 16 bars long, with a cadence at the 8th. It is played twice, and stands as introduction. The second pavane is 20 bars long. It also is repeated, but the repeat is *varied* by runs and trills. The third pavane (the finale) is again 16 bars long, full and rich. The repeat also is varied, and very beautiful indeed the music becomes. (The variation is 18 bars long.) I think everyone ought to know this work of Dowland's. For those who can detect it, it has the great soul of England of the Elizabethan years.

Lastly, you can amuse yourself with the jollity of a "King's Hunt" jig by Dr. John Bull. As you would imagine from his name, he was an Englishman, who was alive when the Spanish Armada was defeated. His "King's Hunt" is jolly enough for anybody. It consists of an 8-bar theme (repeated) and a number of rattling variations. But I would advise you to do nothing but put the roll into your instrument, take a firm grip of yourself, and pedal away merrily, remembering you are for the moment back in Merrie England, where people laughed heartily and hit vigorously.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

NOT SATISFIED (TORONTO).—You have evidently come to the end of the resources of your particular piano-player. Change it for the latest thing that you can get, but make a special effort to test several carefully. Use the same roll for the test piece.

PRO BONO PUBLICO (CHELSEA).—We are sorry that we cannot publish severe condemnations of the instruments you mention, or of any other instrument. While we entirely agree with you that many players are hopeless as judged by the best standard, we would remind you that many purchasers consider price and discounts only, and if they will buy on these lines, well—they deserve all they *don't* get.

PICKLED PLAYERS (KEW).—Yet another Olympian discontent! Yes, we hear that most of the playing was extremely bad. The article may make some mention of the fact. It goes to prove that some makers do not look on the player as a *musical* instrument. The *Daily Telegraph* said as much.

W. R. B. (MANCHESTER).—The two-slot device instrument mentioned in Owner's letter may be one of several.

CURIOS (FINCHLEY).—The Orchestrelle Company's notice of a stand with information was sent to us in error. The Company did not exhibit, but the remarks apply to their proposed exhibit at the forthcoming "Ideal Homes" Exhibition.

DEALER (N.W.).—See answer next above.

MERCHANT (WALLASEY).—We have enquired of our representative, who says that he did not notice the peculiar circumstances you mention when at Olympia.

J. J. F. (NEWTOWN).—See special article on the Exhibition in this number. Yes, we think it quite safe from your point of view to purchase a player-piano to-day.

HUMDRUM (WARRINGTON).—We do not know what kind of player the Liverpool firm mentioned adorn with their name. Why should not they, particularly if it happens to be a good one. Do you owe them a grudge, or—something.

THE PIANO-PLAYER REVIEW.

WORKER (SHEFFIELD).—It is good to hear from a real “bench hand.”

Go very carefully to work; don’t listen so much to the salesmen as to the instrument. Get a roll of “La Campanella,” by Liszt, and take it with you. Use this roll on every player you try—from £20 to £30. Numbers 2, 3 or 5.

MODERN (ROMFORD).—Why not write to the two advertisers you mention.

Both are good men for the work. Yes, we know of several people who have lessons on interpretation. It will be no uncommon thing soon to have interpretation taught in schools in this manner.

A. **FARMER (DEVON).**—We cannot advise you to try and tune your own piano. Even granting the keen ear which from your letter we should say you have, pianoforte tuning requires a good deal of training before it is good. If you are as determined as you say, work this way. C G—G up to D,A,E,—B F sharp—F sharp—C sharp—G sharp—D sharp—A sharp F. Try and get your major thirds A—C sharp sharp, and, descending equally sharp, with a slower beat as you descend. Test with 3rds, 6ths, 10ths, and afterwards double 10ths, etc. Practice is worth many times the period spent in reading the theory of it. Let us know how you or the piano fares—later.

ANNOYED (WORCESTER).—Most library experiences have an element of annoyance. In justice to the libraries, we point out that the “latest things” are always in enormous demand. If the libraries stocked enough copies of all the “latest things” in popular music, we imagine that they would have more dead rolls at the year’s end than would look well on the profit and loss account. Compare the cost of novels and the number supplied for a given fee — music-roll libraries charge much less in proportion.

N. A. C. (**KENSINGTON**).—We think that the *Exchange and Mart* would be the best advertising medium for what you require.

AMATEUR (ELY).—It is quite nice of you to point out where the “Answers to Correspondents” has saved you asking questions; however, we are always pleased to answer them. (1) Leave the levers quite alone, put your speed lever at about halfway, and kick out each subject note as it crosses the bar (tracker bar). (2) When you can do this in the dark, *i.e.*, without watching the roll, get in the time variation. (3) Use your accenting lever on inner parts that cannot be dealt with by the foot. We will arrange for our contributor to meet you if possible. Give some days’ notice.

THE PIANO-PLAYER REVIEW.

KEEN (STOURBRIDGE).—There is and can be no valid reason why a competition festival should not have a class for piano-player performances. Organs were burned as works of the devil ; piano-players are shunned, well—Blacklegs of the profession ! Events in the piano-player world are moving quickly, and it may be that among the popular adjudicators one broad-minded man can be found.

FULL STOP (RICHMOND).—That is what we all thought about the controversy, but you will find further news in this number. Besides, what is the difference in touch ? Will you enter the arena ?

ALWAYS A READER (CORK).—It is scarcely fair to say that the Exhibition article of September was nothing but puffs. We merely described the forthcoming exhibits so that readers could at the Exhibition be prepared on arrival. We are not in the puff line, in spite of temptations. In our advertisement pages people say what they think will best sell their goods; the rest of the paper is for the *help* of readers. When we say that a bad player is a good one we shall have lost our Editor and the present staff.

W. FRANKLAND H. (DULWICH).—If you cannot cure the dumb notes by the use of a pump you will need the services of the maker's mechanic. We do not advise you to tamper with the escape holes.

R. H. B., MARION F., TEDDIE, ORGANIST (LIVERPOOL), PEDALIER (ILFORD).—Read articles "How to Play," Nos. 3-6.

JOHN E., CHAGRIN, FLAUTIST.—"Hints on Motors," Vol. II., No. 10.

VOCALION, GUILDHALL, AMY, PLYMOUTH GIRL.—See Nos. 1-4, Vol. I.

CORRESPONDENCE.

To the Editor, *The Piano-Player Review*.

BOLDMERE VICARAGE,
WYLDE GREEN,

19th September, 1913.

SIR,—I have some views concerning piano-player music-rolls to which I should like to give an airing in your columns, in the hope that they may be approved by you and your readers. My contention is that the rolls as they are now do not give nearly enough information to the player-pianist. First and chiefly, bar-lines ought to be indicated. Assuming that these are useful in printed music, are they not of almost equal use on the rolls? Secondly, all the composer's expression marks ought to be reproduced. To this it may be replied that in effect they are, because there are guiding lines to indicate tempo and force. But these lines are not sufficient, for two reasons. (a) They are not the composer's signs, but some individual's interpretation of his signs. (b) They do not give the benefit of a technical language to those whose primary musical education is gained through the piano-player. By all means let us have the guiding lines as well, but let us also know as often as possible the reasons for them.

I am tempted to enlarge this letter by arguing in favour of these views and trying to anticipate possible objections. But I hope that you and your readers will all agree; and in that case argument will be unnecessary. There will then remain only to persuade the makers of music-rolls to meet the need.

Yours faithfully,

OWEN H. WETHERED.

To the Editor, *The Piano-Player Review*.

8, EAST FETTES AVENUE,
EDINBURGH,

5th September, 1913.

SIR,—I shall be glad if you will tell me through the medium of your correspondence columns where I may obtain a complete list of both 65 and 88-note music-rolls of Bach's music (excluding arrangements). With the exception of the 48 Preludes and Fugues very few of his compositions appear to be published so far as I am aware, but perhaps you can enlighten me.

THE PIANO-PLAYER REVIEW.

My experience of a number of years' use of the piano-player is that most compositions have a cloying effect after a time, and that one, therefore, does not care to buy the music-rolls, and is content to obtain selections from a library. It is otherwise, however, with Bach's music, which seems particularly adapted for rendering with the piano-player. One's enjoyment increases with time and acquaintance, and makes it worth one's while to buy the rolls, as they amply repay the expense.

I, of course, do not rule out altogether rolls by other composers, which would be absurd; but for me there is a particular fascination in music by Bach, which seems to have the curious effect of somehow making other music appear thin in comparison.

I am,
Yours faithfully,
"A BELIEVER IN THE PIANO-PLAYER."

[We know of no complete list of Bach's works for the piano-player. Get the catalogues of the Orchestrelle Company and the Perforated Music Company, and you will then probably have a list of all Bach rolls in existence. It would be a great thing to induce all of our readers to appreciate Bach as you do.—ED.]

To the Editor, *The Piano-Player Review*.

LONDON, W.

SIR,—A few days ago I had the pleasure of a few minutes' conversation with an admitted expert player-pianist, a professional.

He was very annoyed that I should think first-class piano-player work good enough for the concert platform in the ordinary way—*i.e.*, entrance by payment—his chief objection being that it was unfair to the pianist.

Perhaps some of your readers will back me up when I claim that good player-piano work is worth paying to hear.

Yours, etc.,
CURIOS.

P.S.—This same expert player said he would rather play a thing badly by hand than brilliantly with the aid of his player.

LIBRARY ANNOUNCEMENTS.

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ACCENTIST (65-Note).

11026	Nocturne, Op. 27. No. 2, in D flat	Chopin 5/-
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64705	Puppchen. Selections	Gilbert 6/6

Imperial Linenized Rolls for Full-compass Players.

THE PIANO-PLAYER REVIEW.

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54701	The Silent Mere	Lind	5/6
54704	Visions of an Unknown Land	Lind	5/6
44759	Little Grey Home in the West	Lohr	4/6
44739	Amours de Paris	Marchetti	4/6
54758	Mightly Like a Rose. Waltz	Nevin	5/6
54756	Ours, I Think. Waltz	Shand	5/6
34729	Somewhere a Voice is Calling	Tate	3/6
64042	Concerto. B flat minor. Part I.	Tschaikowsky	6/6
64043	Concerto. B flat minor. Part II.	Tschaikowsky	6/6
64044	Concerto. B flat minor. Part III.	Tschaikowsky	6/6
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ANGELUS.

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r1062	Impromptu. Op. 142, No. 1 F. minor	Schubert	8/6
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r4031	Marsch. Op. 18, No. 3	Gade	6/6
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*R4040	Fireside Tales. Nos. 1, 2, 3	MacDowell	7/6
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*M7215	Little Grey Home in the West. Valse	Lohr	6/-
*M7217	Nights of Gladness. Valse	d'Ancliffe	6/-
*M86440	Valse Fantastique	Menges	7/-
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THE PIANO-PLAYER REVIEW.

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s5532	Bagatelle, Op. 33.	C.	No. 5.	Allegro ma non troppo	..	<i>Beethoven</i> 7/6
s5534	Bagatelle, Op. 33.	No. 6.		Allegretto quasi andante. D. No. 7. Presto. A flat	..	<i>Beethoven</i> 9/6
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s5562	Mazurka, Op. 7, No. 1.	B flat	<i>Chopin</i> 6/6
s5568	Mazurka, Op. 17, No. 1.	B flat	<i>Chopin</i> 7/6
s5582	Mazurka, Op. 33, No. 2.	D	<i>Chopin</i> 7/6
s5580	Mazurka, Op. 50, No. 1.	G	<i>Chopin</i> 5/-
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s5612	The Land of Roses. Waltz	<i>Finck</i> 8/6
s5558	Prelude, Fugue, and Variations	<i>Franck</i> 8/6
s5548	Three Dances, Op. 77, from Japanese Ballet, "O Mitaki San."	No. 1. Butterfly Dance	<i>Friml</i> 6/6
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THE PIANO-PLAYER REVIEW.

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No further Bulletin.

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50232	Cracovienne fantastique. Op. 14, No. 6	Paderewski	9/6
A50233	Oh, once I had a beauteous Fatherland. Song in E major Accomp. for Baritone.				Lassen	5/6
50234	The Child of the Prince. Robber-March	..	..	..	Lehar	7/—
50235	The Child of the Prince. Waltz	..	..	..	Lehar	9/—
50236	The Child of the Prince. Song "Walzer, wer hat dich wohl erdacht"	..	..	..	Lehar	6/6
50237	The Child of the Prince. Song "Wüstest du, Mädchen"	..	..	..	Lehar	6/—
50238	The Count of Luxemburg. Waltz	..	..	..	Lehar	9/6
50239	The Man with the three Wives. Rose-Waltz	..	..	..	Lehar	10/6
50240	Gipsy Love. Song "Nur die Liebe macht uns jung"	..	..	..	Lehar	6/6
50241	Gipsy Love. Waltz	..	..	..	Lehar	8/—
50242	Toccata. Homage to Czerny. Op. 46, No. 5. D minor	..	..	..	Leschetitzky	10/—
50243	Henry VIII. Fantasia brillante	..	..	..	Leybach	9/6
50244	Capricietto. Op. 8. A flat major	Liebling	5/—
50245	The Fantastic Waltz from "The Great Review"	Lincke	10/6
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50247	Broken Heart. Waltz	Lion	6/6
50248	Pilgrimage Years (Années de Pélerinage). 1st Year Switzerland. No. 2. On the Lake of Wallenstaedt	Liszt	6/6
50249	Auf Flügeln des Gesanges (On the Wings of Song). Arr. by Franz Liszt	..	..	..	Mendelssohn-Bartholdy	6/6
50250	Frischschütz (The Marksman). Overture. Arr. by Franz Liszt.	..	..	..	Weber	10/6
50251	Du bist die Ruh (Thou art Repose). Song Arr. by Franz Liszt.	..	..	..	Schubert	6/—
50252	Etudes d'Exécution transcendante No. 11. D flat major. Evening Harmonics	..	..	..	Liszt	9/6
50253	Margaret at the Spinning-Wheel	..	..	..	Schubert	9/6
	Arr. by Franz Liszt.					
50254	Légendes. No. 1. St. François d'Assise. The Sermon to the Birds	..	..	..	Liszt	10/6
50255	Love Song. Dedication. Arr. by Fr. Liszt	..	..	..	Schumann	10/—
50256	Love Dreams. Nocturno No. 3	..	..	..	Liszt	7/6

Imperial Linenized Rolls with Pedal Perforations.

THE PIANO-PLAYER REVIEW.

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50257	Eulogy of Tears (Lob der Tränen)	Schubert 7/6
	Transcription by Fr. Liszt.	Liszt 6/6
50258	Paganini-Etude. No. 5. Study for the Flute	Liszt 10/6
50259	Hungarian Rhapsody. No. 2	Liszt 8/6
50260	Hungarian Rhapsody. No. 6	Liszt 8/6
50261	Hungarian Rhapsody. No. 7	Liszt 10/6
50262	Hungarian Rhapsody. No. 11	Liszt 10/6
50263	Hungarian Rhapsody. No. 12	Liszt 10/6
50264	Hungarian Rhapsody. No. 13	Liszt 10/6
50265	Rigoletto. Paraphrase arr. by Franz Liszt	Verdi 8/6
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50267	Wohin (Whither?) Song. Transcr. by Franz Liszt	Schubert 6/-
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Imperial Linenized Rolls for the Music Room.

THE PIANO-PLAYER REVIEW.

ROLL NO.						PRICE
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M908	Elegie. Op. 83, No. 1	Moszkowski	3/-
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M4212	Pleasure Land. Roll II.	Neat	3/9
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